

Elon holds athletes to same standards as all applicants, breaking national trend

Alexa Johnson
Senior Reporter

A study recently confirmed what many already knew or assumed: athletes have a better chance of entering a prestigious institution because of their skill on the field, allowing schools to admit some students who have not met the standard entrance requirements.

The Associated Press released this information in a review of admissions data from the majority of successful NCAA college football teams.

"We make sure students are admissible before we even bring them in," Elon University women's tennis coach, Elizabeth Anderson, said. "Often our students are eligible for presidential scholarships or a Fellows program."

Although the special treatment hype could be attributed to the athletes' ability to enhance the institutions reputation, many players say it is not true.

"When I was being recruited, I would immediately be asked for a transcript," Kelsey Evans, a freshman basketball player, said. "If my grades were not good enough to get into that particular school, they would've stopped recruiting me."

But athletes do receive special attention, according to a report from the NCAA.

The report said athletes are scouted and receive scholarships that partially or completely pay for their tuition, depending on their sport. Athletes are evaluated by a sliding scale: if their GPA is low, their SATs must indicate that they are capable and vice-versa.

Elon University women's

basketball coach Karen Barefoot said that doesn't mean Elon admits any athlete who just demonstrates remarkable skills. Character is also a contributing factor.

"Our number one priority is to find kids who fit our principles," Barefoot said. "Athletes who want to be more than big basketball players."

Brandon Brant, a freshman football player, donned a Phoenix jersey even though he did not meet standard requirements. He now earns better grades at Elon than he did in high school.

"Students are approved by the board of admissions, so the school feels that they have a chance to be successful," Brant said. "Some athletes have a lot of potential academically, but often they just don't have the resources to receive tutoring or take SAT workshops that the average Elon student would have at their disposal."

"Special treatment isn't the question or a main concern," junior football player Dontay Taylor said. "It's about what you do when you get to school, no matter how you got in."

According to an NCAA report, the use of special admissions is acceptable only if students with other talents aside from sports are also admitted through the program. But the AP found that athletes were 10 times more likely to reap the benefits of special admissions in 27 schools out of the 120 that participated in the review.

"No matter how you look at it there should be no problem with giving people chances whether if they've earned it through the classroom or athletics," Taylor said. "They've worked hard to get there."

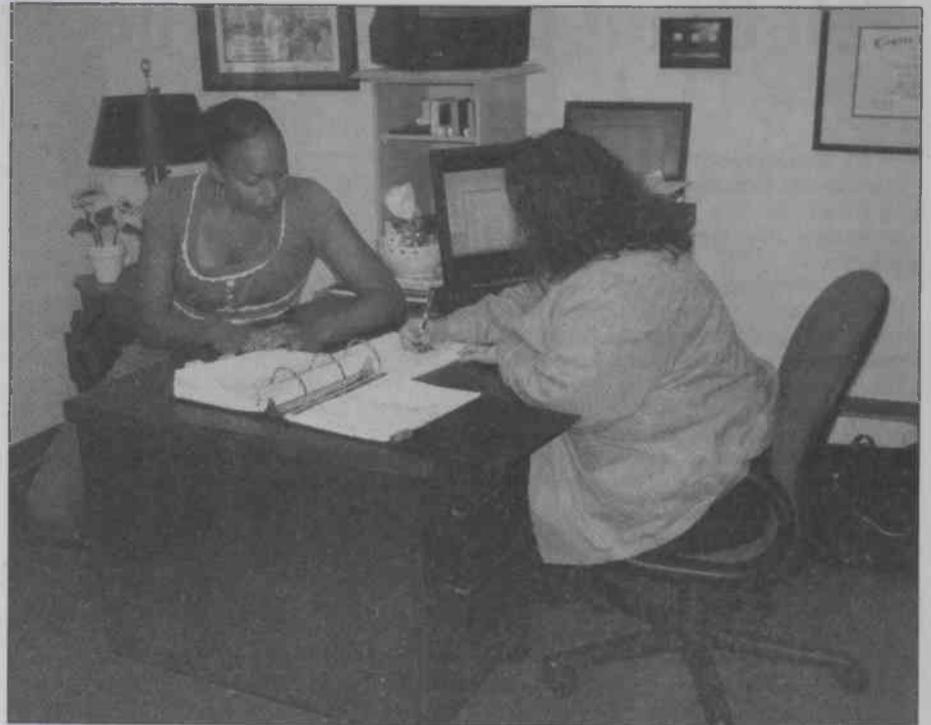


PHOTO SUBMITTED
Cayce Crenshaw, Elon's director of academic support for athletics, helps women's basketball player, Urysla Cotton with class selection.

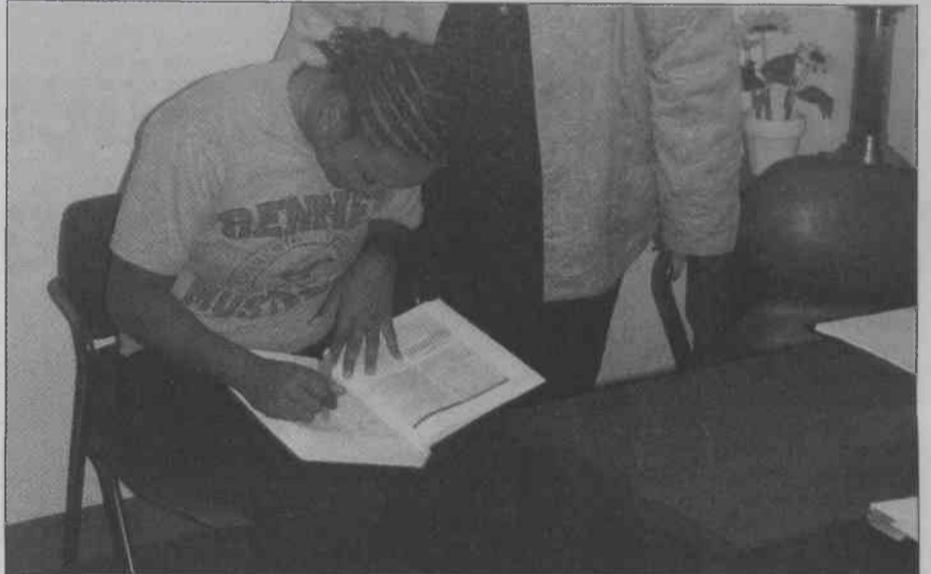


PHOTO SUBMITTED
Women's basketball player Urysla Cotton begins class selection.

South shows increase in minority and low income level students

Sarah Costello
Graphics Editor

The South is the first region with more than 50 percent of minority and low-income students in the public school system, according to a January 2010 report released by the Southern Education Foundation.

The South, which has a history of racial segregation and civil rights movements, was once the only section in the United States that lawfully permitted segregation in schools.

Despite strides toward equality since the Civil Rights movement, many southern schools still face the same dilemmas. Educators require new curricula and restructured teaching methods to meet the needs of more diverse classrooms.

"In terms of minorities, I don't know that it would change education, but I do think that it challenges us to think about how to teach children from different cultures," Amy Harper-Wallace, Elon Elementary School principal, said. "In terms of poverty, that changes a lot because (low-income students') knowledge base is different."

Students from low-income families often encounter difficulties learning at the same level as other students. This is due to non-English speaking parents and family members who did not complete an education. Various backgrounds often contribute to different learning levels.

The Southern Education Foundation stressed the challenges involved with the shifting of minorities to majorities in the coming years. Southerners must overcome existing prejudice and racism for non-white groups, urge the writers of the report.

"I think we are willing to pay attention to (the poverty level) more now than in the past," assistant professor of education Terry Tomasek said.

"I think we were less able to pay attention to differences in the past. We wanted to make everyone the same. We're now more willing to allow differences."

Another concern from the report is academic performance and attendance levels of poor and minority students. On average poor and minority students score lower on tests and on the federal National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which is the only national performance examination for students K-12.

Minority and low-income students drop out of school more frequently and are less likely to graduate from high school, according to the report.

"What was the type of student 50 years ago is no longer the norm now," Tomasek said.

Tomasek and Harper-Wallace agree education must be broadened and tweaked for the new student majority. Teachers must be prepared at the undergraduate level to recognize the diverse needs of children in the classroom and address those needs in methods that best fit the individual student.

Tomasek also said students need to learn how to be problem-solvers, especially low-income students who could be the first in their families to attend college.

"Hopefully (the changes) will make education better because it will help us teach to wider, broader audiences," Harper-Wallace said. "We need to be culturally neutral so we can reach children in any type of culture."

It's not out in the open, but
GRIEF IS HERE.

1 out of 3 college students experienced the illness or loss of a family member or close friend in the last year. Talk about loss and help your friends in need by starting a National Students of AMF Support Network Chapter at your school.

TalkAboutLoss.org